

Scott's birthday dinner ~ from Team Open Book and Solange

Thank you for this glorious meal.
We want to share it with you with Solange's recipes.

Sea Scallop Ceviche

Solange puts the scallops in the freezer for about 2 hours so they are easier to slice very thin. Slicing the scallops thinly both provides a nice presentation and helps the lemon "cook" the scallops.

Meanwhile, prepare the sauce, which is approximately half lemon juice and half olive oil.

5 to 10 minutes before serving, put the scallop slices in a pretty bowl or plate. Add salt and pepper and drape them with the lemon and olive oil. You can add a dash of spice (she used Piment d'Espelette, a French spice from the Pyrénées, but a little paprika would be just as nice).

One large scallop is plenty for one person.

Avocado & Tuna Tartare (wrapped in cucumber)

Cut tuna and Granny Smith apples into cubes (the same size). Sprinkle with salt and pepper, toasted sesame seeds and a little sesame oil mixed with mustard. (You can also add lime zest and a squirt of lime juice.)

Meanwhile, cut cucumber slices length wise to form an enclosure for the tartare. You want slices that are thick enough to hold up, but thin enough to be pliable. Wrap them into a circle and close with a tooth pick.

This is a wonderful way to present any kind of small salad. In the summer, for example, you could fill the cucumber ring with a salad of

small tomatoes and diced cucumber, simply dressed with a lemon vinaigrette and a garnish of basil.

The avocado rose

(Do this at the last moment so the avocado doesn't brown)

Peel the avocado, cut it in half, remove the pit.

Put the half down and slice it very thinly, either length-wise or side-wise (she did it side-wise). Then gently push the avocado pieces to make one long line. Once you have the line, bring one end in and continue to roll it into a flower. It may take some practice, but once you master it, you will want to serve avocado this way for everything.

Use your hands or a spatula to pick up the avocado rose and place it over the cucumber. You can also put a little sprinkle of sea salt (or Maldon salt) on the avocado and a little skirt of lime/lemon juice to prevent oxidation.

Five Fish Soup

Pick a mixture of 5 fish fillets, including salmon, for the taste and color Solange did a huge amount, but for 4 people, I recommend 1 pound, or 1 1/2 pounds

Chop 2 or 3 shallots

Sauté them at medium heat in olive oil until they start to brown

Add the fish on top

Cover with small tomatoes, sliced in half

Cover with water (just to the top of the fish)

Add some Thai Curry Paste (Solange recommends the red curry paste): approximately 1 tbs (add more as needed)

Add salt (start with 1 tsp and add more as needed)

Add some fresh thyme

Bring to a boil, lower the heat to a gentle simmer, cover and cook for 20 minutes.

Taste, adjust the sauce as needed and serve.

What I love about this soup is the simplicity. Here are a few options:

- Sauté chopped fennel with the shallots
- Add a few clams and/or mussels the last 10 minutes of cooking
- Add peeled or unpeeled shrimp in the final 2-3 minutes of cooking

Lobster Tail Cooked in Salt

Line a cooking tray with parchment paper or foil

Put kosher salt and some thyme (optional)

Put the lobster tails over the salt and cover them on top with more kosher salt

Cook for 15 - 20 minutes at 385 degrees

Remove the salt and use good kitchen scissors to cut open the shell.

Serve with a side of lemon and a drizzle of good olive oil

Apple Cake

Scott thinks no one will ever make this cake without the special attachment to cut the apples into long strands. He may be right. But we have rarely seen a more beautiful dessert. Here are two sites for inspiration:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ27EvXEQ0A>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6HGb6B1N_0